How to Install Puppy Linux on a USB Drive or PC

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Run a lightweight version of Linux without the commitment

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Last Updated: February 19, 2026 Fact Checked

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Do you want to try Linux without committing to a full installation? Unlike other Linux distributions, Puppy Linux doesn't require a full installation—it can boot from a USB drive. Puppy Linux is also incredibly lightweight, so it'll run nicely even if you don't have much RAM. After booting from the image, You can install Puppy Linux on your hard drive to use it as your regular desktop operating system. This wikiHow article will show you how to get started with Puppy Linux, from creating a bootable USB drive and installing the operating system on your PC.

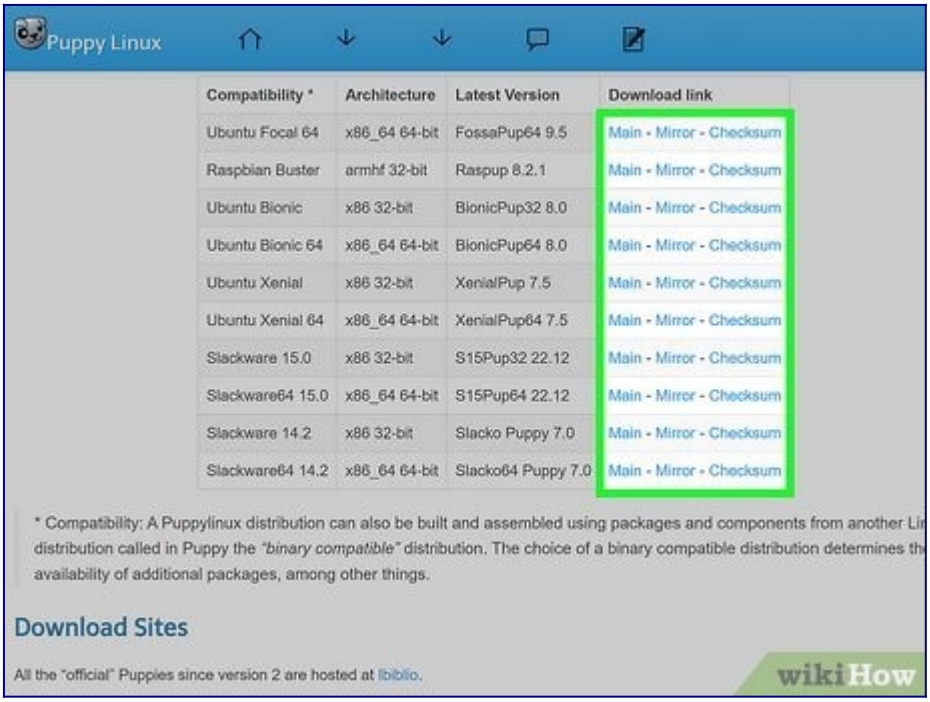
Things You Should Know

- Download an ISO image of an official Puppy Linux distribution from https://puppylinux-woof-ce.github.io/ and use it to create a bootable USB or DVD.
- You can use free programs like UNetBootin, Rufus, or Balena Etcher to create a bootable USB drive from an ISO file.
- You can run Puppy Linux from a USB flash drive without installing the operating system. If you like it, you can install it on your hard drive.

Part 1

Creating a Bootable Image

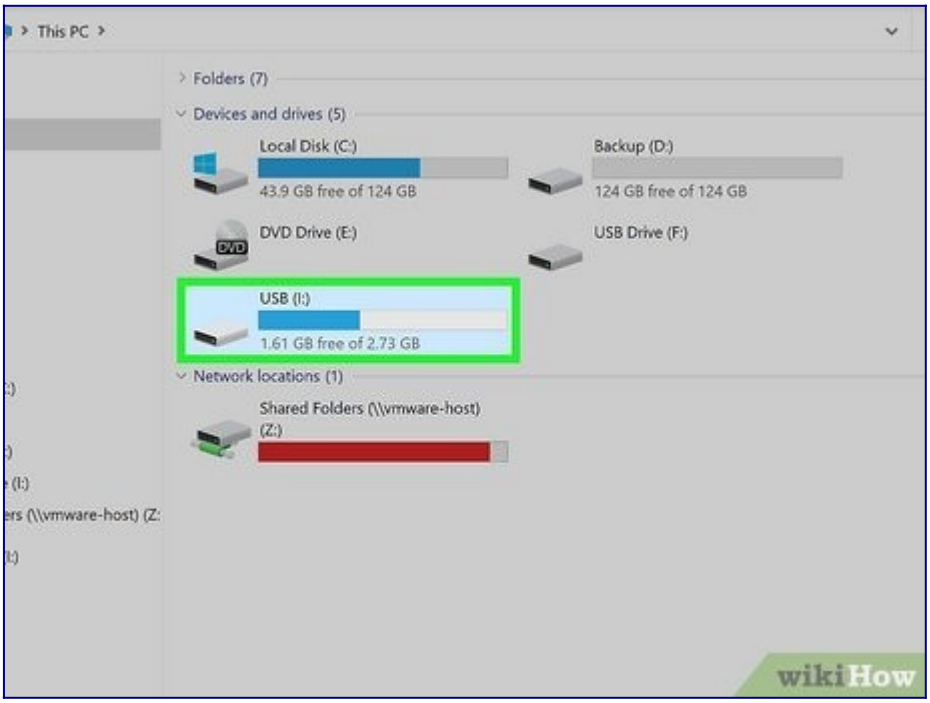
Download Article

1. 

1

Download the ISO file from https://puppylinux-woof-ce.github.io/index.html#download. You'll always find the latest official images at this location. The "Compatibility" column tells you which distribution packages and components are incorporated in that image of Puppy Linux. Click **Main** next to the version you want to download to download the ISO file.[1]

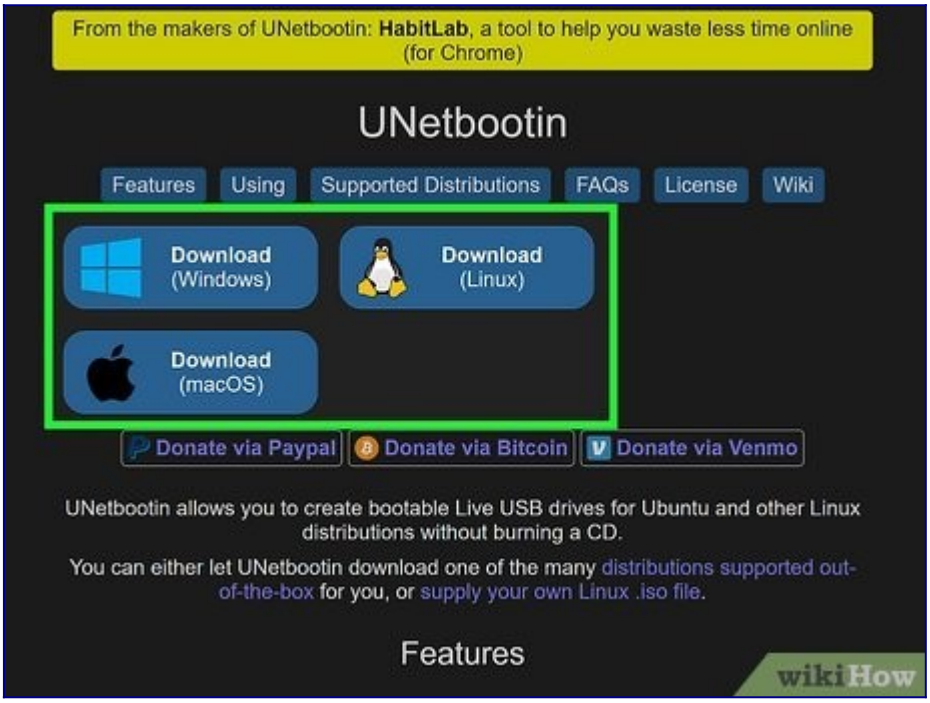
- As you can see, there are many official distributions of Puppy Linux, including FossaPup, BionicPup, and Slacko. You can play around with any Puppy distribution you'd like, but make sure the version you download matches your system architecture (e.g., 64-bit or 32-bit). If you're not sure which version you need, it's easy to check on Linux and Windows. The latest versions of Puppy Linux are at the top of the list.

2. 

2

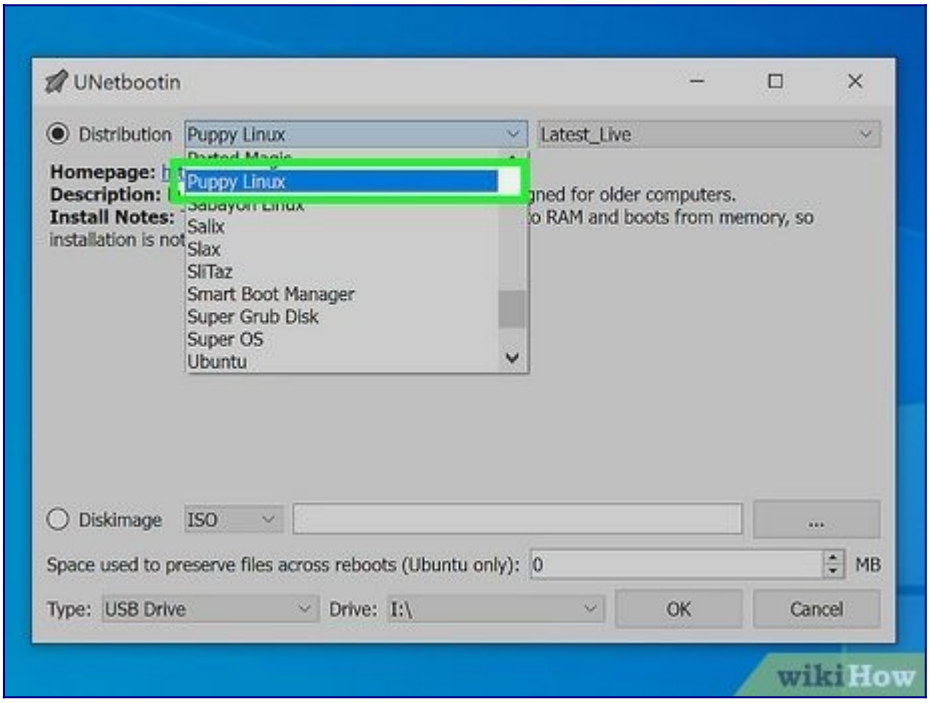
Insert a USB drive. It is recommended you use a USB drive that is between 16 to 32 GB so you have enough space to save your own files.[2]

- Alternatively, if you have an optical disk burner, you can burn the ISO image to a CD or DVD.

3. 
From the makers of UNetbootin: HabitLab, a tool to help you waste less time online (for Chrome)
UNetbootin
Features
Using
Supported Distributions
FAQs
License
Wiki
Download (Windows)
Download (Linux)
Download (macOS)
Donate via Paypal
Donate via Bitcoin
Donate via Venmo
UNetbootin allows you to create bootable Live USB drives for Ubuntu and other Linux distributions without burning a CD.
You can either let UNetbootin download one of the many distributions supported out-of-the-box for you, or supply your own Linux .iso file.
Features
wikiHow
3

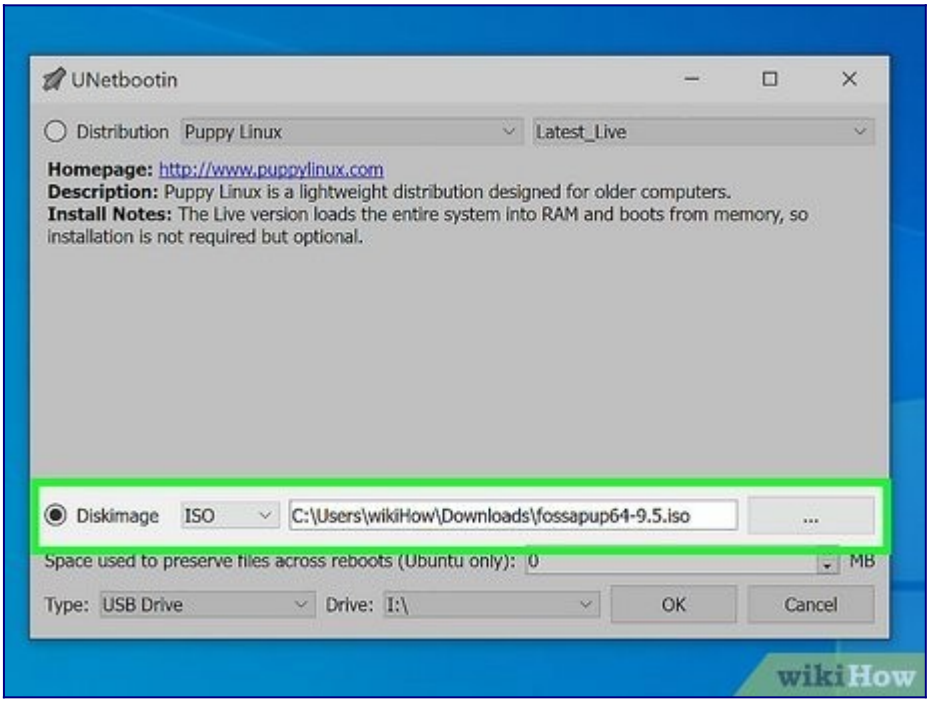
Download UNetBootin. UNetBootin is a free program used specifically to make a Linux bootable USB drive. It also allows you to preserve space on the USB drive for file storage if you want to boot Puppy Linux from the USB without installing it. Alternatively, Windows users can use Rufus, and Mac users can use Balena Etcher (though Etcher does not give you the option to preserve disk space on the USB drive). To download:

- Go to https://unetbootin.github.io/
- Click the download button for your operating system at the top of the page.
- Open the installation file in your Downloads folder.
- Follow any prompts to complete the installation.

4. 

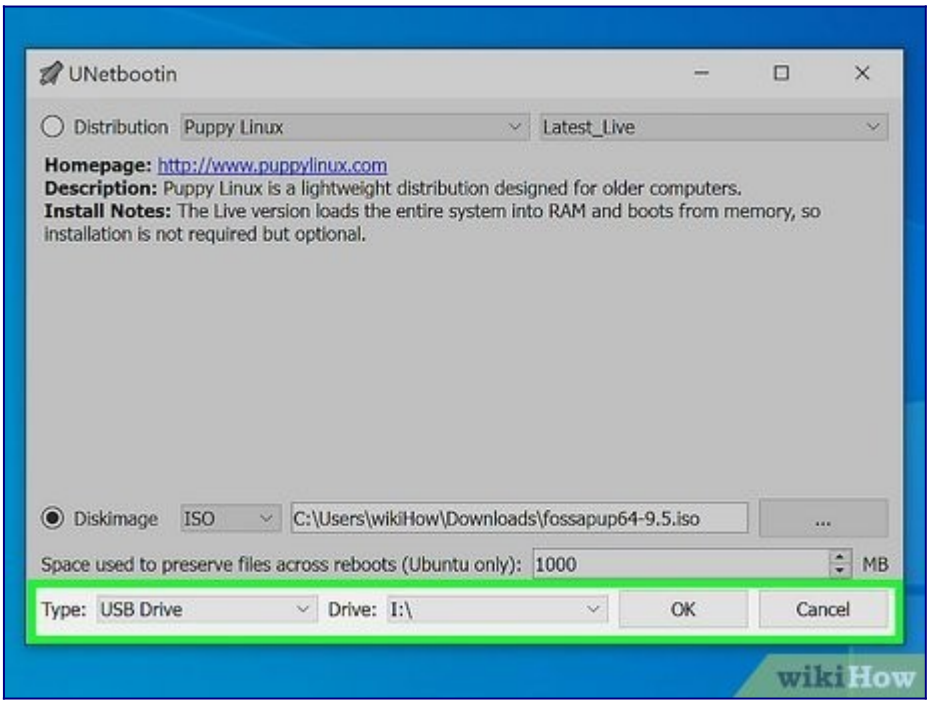
4

Open UNetBootin and select `Puppy Linux` as the distribution. The first drop-down menu at the top of UNetBootin allows you to select a Linux distribution. Use this drop-down menu to select "Puppy Linux."

5. 

5

Select your disk image. To do so, click the button with three dots (⋯) on the right side next to "Diskimage." Then select the ISO file for the version of Puppy Linux you downloaded and click **Open**.

6. 

6

Select your USB drive and click OK. UNetBootin should select your USB drive automatically. Check the drive letter next to "Drive" to ensure the correct USB drive is selected, and then click **OK** to begin writing the ISO file to your USB drive.

- This may take several minutes. Once it is complete, you can use the USB drive to boot Puppy Linux.

Part 2

Changing Your Boot Order

Download Article

1.

1

Boot into your BIOS/UEFI. How you do this will be different for each computer make and model. When you boot up your computer, it will generally tell you what button to press to boot into the BIOS. It's usually F1, F2, F11, F12, Esc, or Del. If your computer boots too fast for you to see what button to press, use these steps to boot into the BIOS from within Windows:

- Click the **Windows Start** menu.
- Click the **Settings/Gear** icon.
- Click **Update & Security** (Windows 10) or **system** (Windows 11).
- Click **Recovery**
- Click **Restart Now** next to or below "Advanced Startup."
- Click **Troubleshoot**.

- Click **UEFI Firmware Settings**.
- Click **Restart**.

2.

2

Locate the boot order menu. Use the arrow keys to navigate the menu and press **Enter** to make a selection. The menu may be called "Boot menu," "Boot order," or similar.

3.

3

Place your USB drive first in the boot order. This ensures that your PC will try to boot from a USB drive before trying to boot from your hard drive. If no USB drive is present, your computer will boot from the hard drive like normal.

4.

4
Save and exit the BIOS. After changing the boot order, select the option to save and exit the BIOS. Your computer will restart.

Part 3

Booting into Puppy Linux

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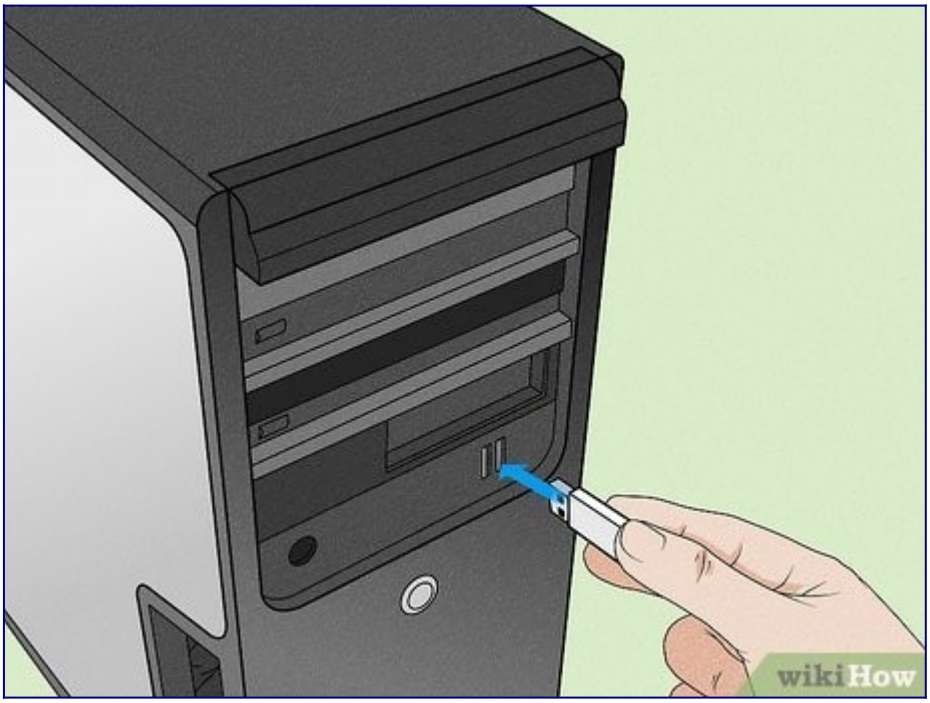
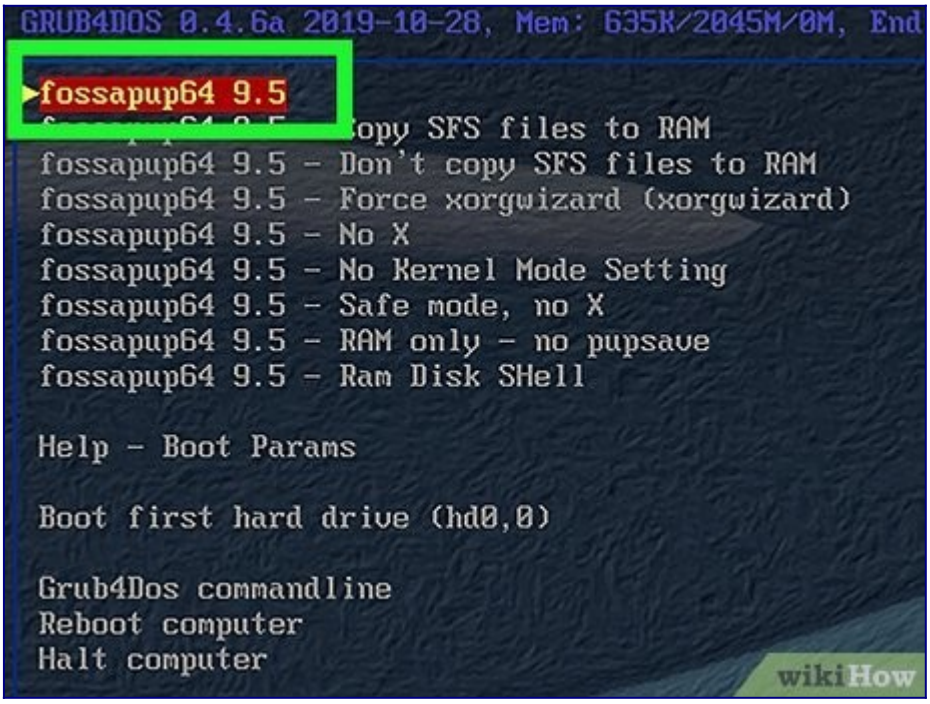
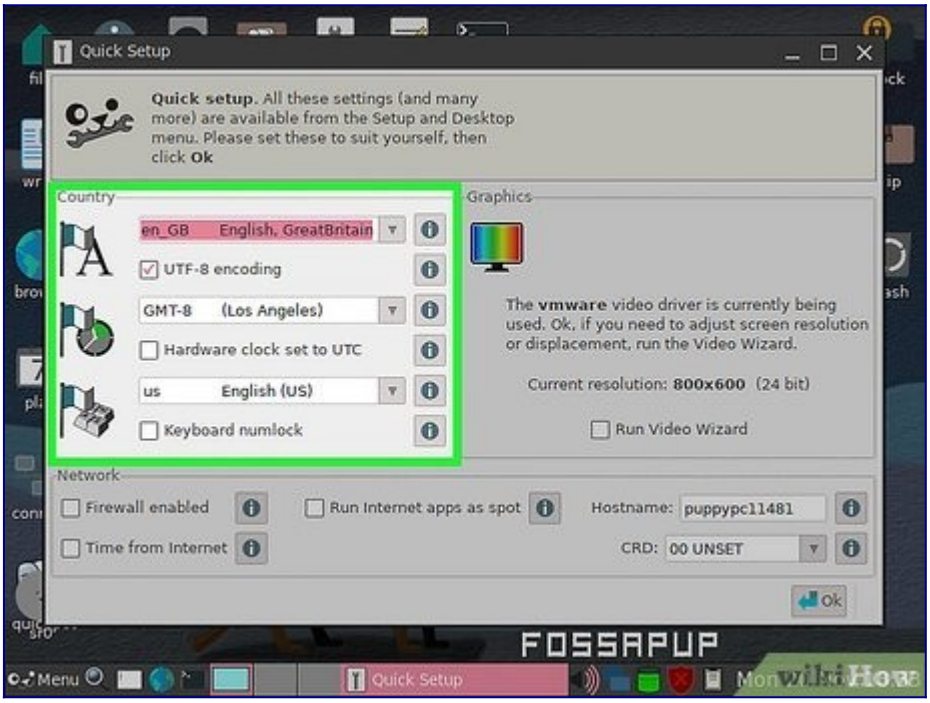
1. 

1
Boot from the USB drive. To boot from the USB drive, insert it into a free USB slot on your PC, then restart your computer.[3]
   - To boot from a USB drive on a Mac, insert the USB drive into a free USB slot and restart your Mac. Press and hold the **Option** key after you hear the startup sound. This will open the boot menu. Select your USB drive to boot from.

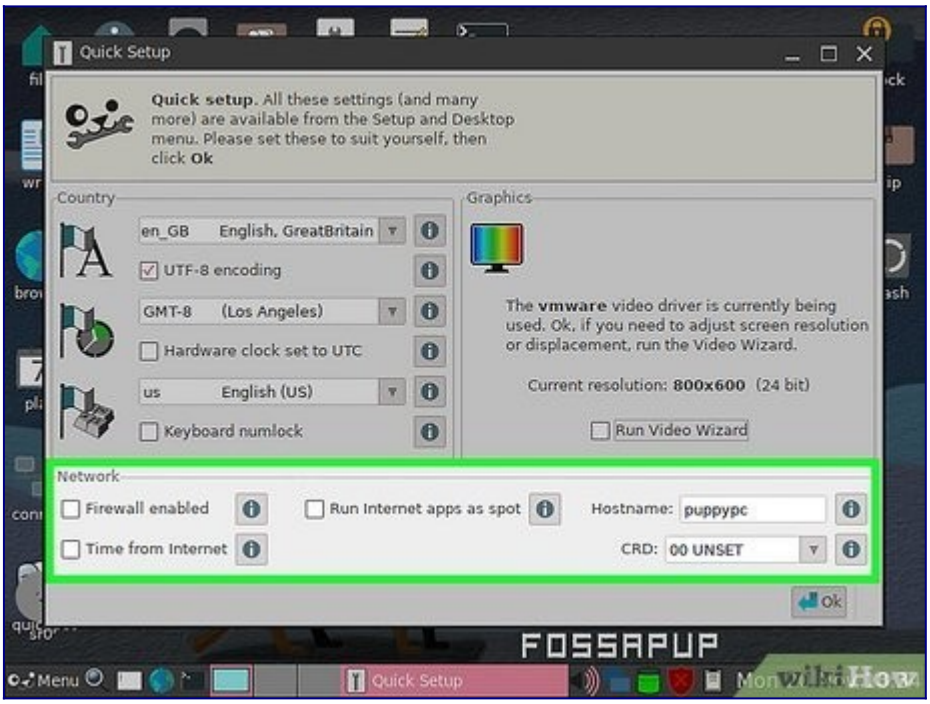
- If prompted, select your USB drive.

2. 
GRUB4DOS 0.4.6a 2019-10-28, Mem: 635K/2045M/0M, End
fossapup64 9.5
opy SFS files to RAM
fossapup64 9.5 - Don't copy SFS files to RAM
fossapup64 9.5 - Force xorgwizard (xorgwizard)
fossapup64 9.5 - No X
fossapup64 9.5 - No Kernel Mode Setting
fossapup64 9.5 - Safe mode, no X
fossapup64 9.5 - RAM only - no pupsave
fossapup64 9.5 - Ram Disk SHell
Help - Boot Params
Boot first hard drive (hd0,0)
Grub4Dos commandline
Reboot computer
Halt computer
wikiHow
2

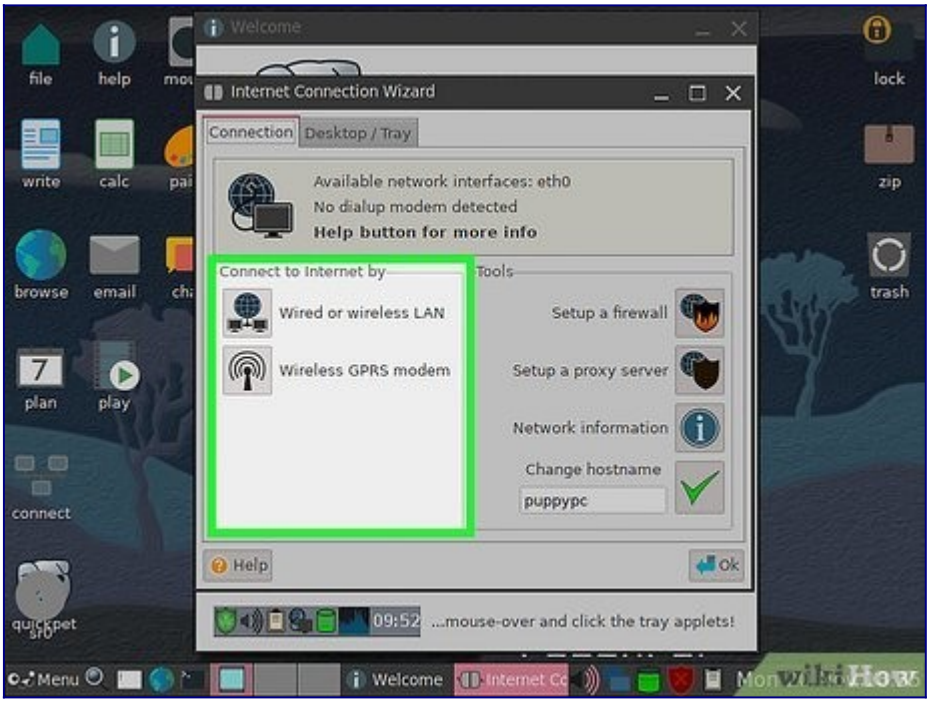
Select the first option on the boot menu. For example, if you have FossaPup installed on your USB drive, you would select **Fossapup64 9.5** at the top of the menu.

3. 
Quick Setup
Quick setup. All these settings (and many more) are available from the Setup and Desktop menu. Please set these to suit yourself, then click Ok
Country
en_GB English, GreatBritain
UTF-8 encoding
GMT-8 (Los Angeles)
Hardware clock set to UTC
us English (US)
Keyboard numlock
Graphics
The vmware video driver is currently being used. Ok, if you need to adjust screen resolution or displacement, run the Video Wizard.
Current resolution: 800x600 (24 bit)
Run Video Wizard
Network
Firewall enabled
Run Internet apps as spot
Hostname: puppypc11481
Time from Internet
CRD: 00 UNSET
Ok
FOSSAPUP
Menu
Quick Setup
3

Select your language, time zone, and keyboard layout. You will see a Quick Setup menu when Puppy Linux loads. Select your language, time zone, and preferred keyboard layout.

4. 
Quick Setup
Quick setup. All these settings (and many more) are available from the Setup and Desktop menu. Please set these to suit yourself, then click Ok
Country
en_GB English, GreatBritain
UTF-8 encoding
GMT-8 (Los Angeles)
Hardware clock set to UTC
us English (US)
Keyboard numlock
Graphics
The vmware video driver is currently being used. Ok, if you need to adjust screen resolution or displacement, run the Video Wizard.
Current resolution: 800x600 (24 bit)
Run Video Wizard
Network
Firewall enabled
Run Internet apps as spot
Hostname: puppypc
Time from Internet
CRD: 00 UNSET
Ok
FOSSAPUP
Menu
Quick Setup
4

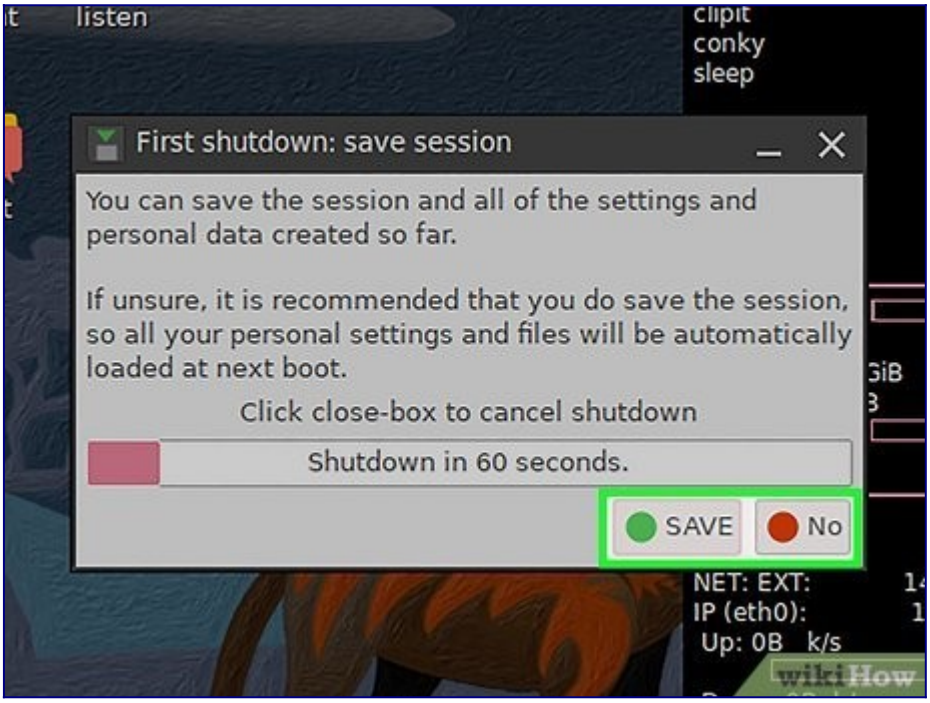
Select additional options and click OK. The Quick Setup menu also has options that allow you to change the hostname, enable a firewall, run the video wizard to change your screen resolution, etc. When you're finished, click **OK** to move to the welcome screen.

5. 

5

Set up an internet connection. You will likely need to connect to the internet. Use the following steps to do so:

- Click **Internet Connection** on the Welcome screen or **Connect** on the desktop.
- Select the option to connect via a wired or wireless LAN or a Wireless GPRS modem.
- Select your wired or wireless connection.
- Enter your Wi-Fi Password.
- Click **Connect Now**.

6. 
listen
clipit
conky
sleep
First shutdown: save session
You can save the session and all of the settings and personal data created so far.
If unsure, it is recommended that you do save the session, so all your personal settings and files will be automatically loaded at next boot.
Click close-box to cancel shutdown
Shutdown in 60 seconds.
SAVE
No
NET: EXT:
IP (eth0):
Up: 0B k/s
wikiHow
6

Save your session (optional). If you just want to play around with Puppy Linux and not install it, feel free to do so. Since the operating system runs entirely in RAM, all of your changes and actions will be deleted when you shut down your PC. If you choose not to install Puppy Linux but want to save the changes you've made to the operating system, follow these steps to do so:[4]

- When you're ready to log out, go to **Menu** and select **Reboot** or **Shutdown**.
- Click **SAVE** on the pop-up window.
- Choose a partition and click **Ok**. You can choose a partition on your hard drive or storage space on your USB drive.
- Select **Normal** if you don't need to encrypt the file (common), or select **Encrypt with LUKS** and follow the on-screen instructions to encrypt your saved files.
- Select a file system and click **Ok**.
- Select how big you want your save space to be and click **Ok**. 512 MB is the recommended, but you can use up to 4 GB.
- Enter a name for the save and click **OK**.
- Click **YES, SAVE** if the current location works. If not, click **CHANGE FOLDER** and select a different location.

Part 4

Installing Puppy Linux

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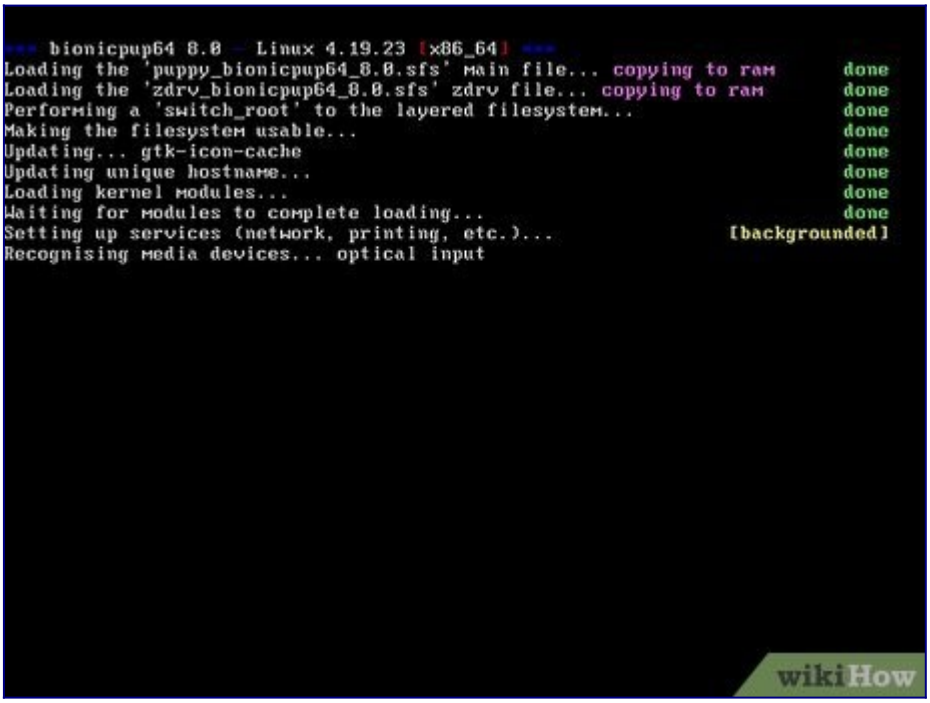
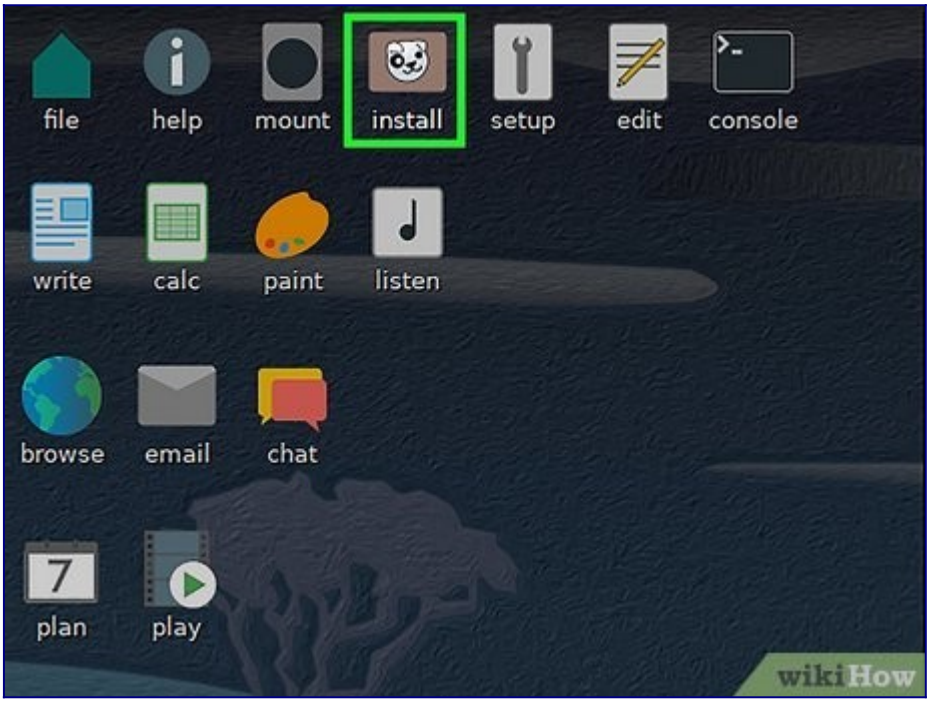
1. 
bionicpup64 8.0 - Linux 4.19.23 [x86_64]
Loading the 'puppy_bionicpup64_8.0.sfs' main file... copying to ram done
Loading the 'zdrv_bionicpup64_8.0.sfs' zdrv file... copying to ram done
Performing a 'switch_root' to the layered filesystem... done
Making the filesystem usable... done
Updating... gtk-icon-cache done
Updating unique hostname... done
Loading kernel modules... done
Waiting for modules to complete loading... done
Setting up services (network, printing, etc.)... [backgrounded]
Recognising media devices... optical input
wikiHow
1

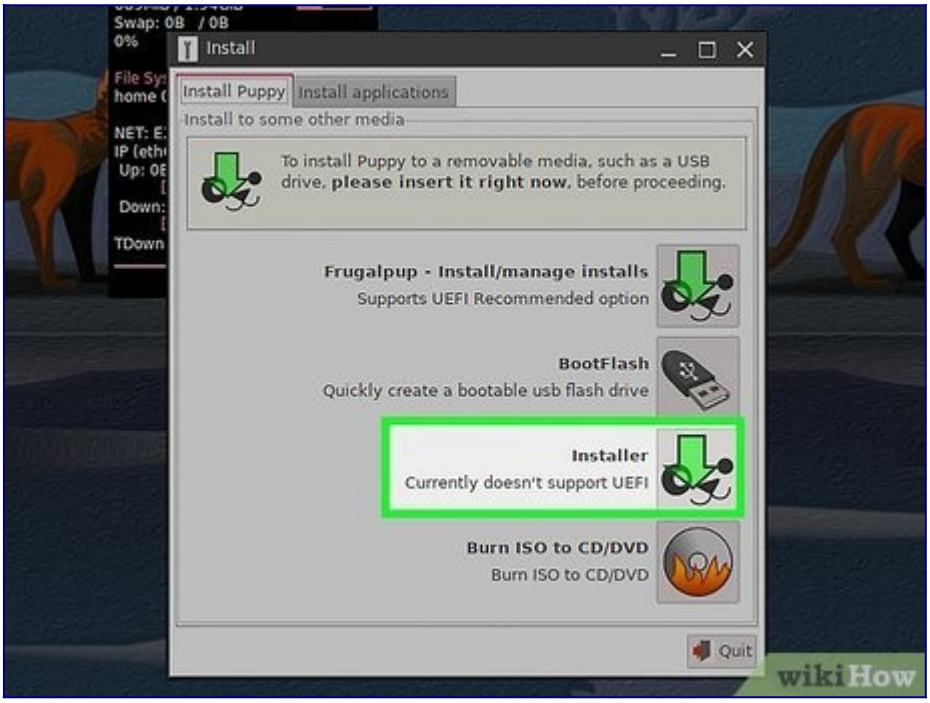
Boot from your Puppy Linux installation media. Puppy Linux is mostly designed to run off a USB drive. However, if you want a more permanent installation, start by booting from the image you created.[5] Once you've reached the desktop, move to the next step.

2. 

2

Click Install on the desktop. It has an icon that resembles a puppy face. It's in the first row of applications on the desktop.

- Alternatively, you can access the installer in the menu by clicking **Menu** followed by **Setup** followed by **Puppy Installer**.

3. 
Install
Install Puppy
Install applications
Install to some other media
To install Puppy to a removable media, such as a USB drive, please insert it right now, before proceeding.
Frugalpup - Install/manage installs
Supports UEFI Recommended option
BootFlash
Quickly create a bootable usb flash drive
Installer
Currently doesn't support UEFI
Burn ISO to CD/DVD
Burn ISO to CD/DVD
Quit
wikiHow

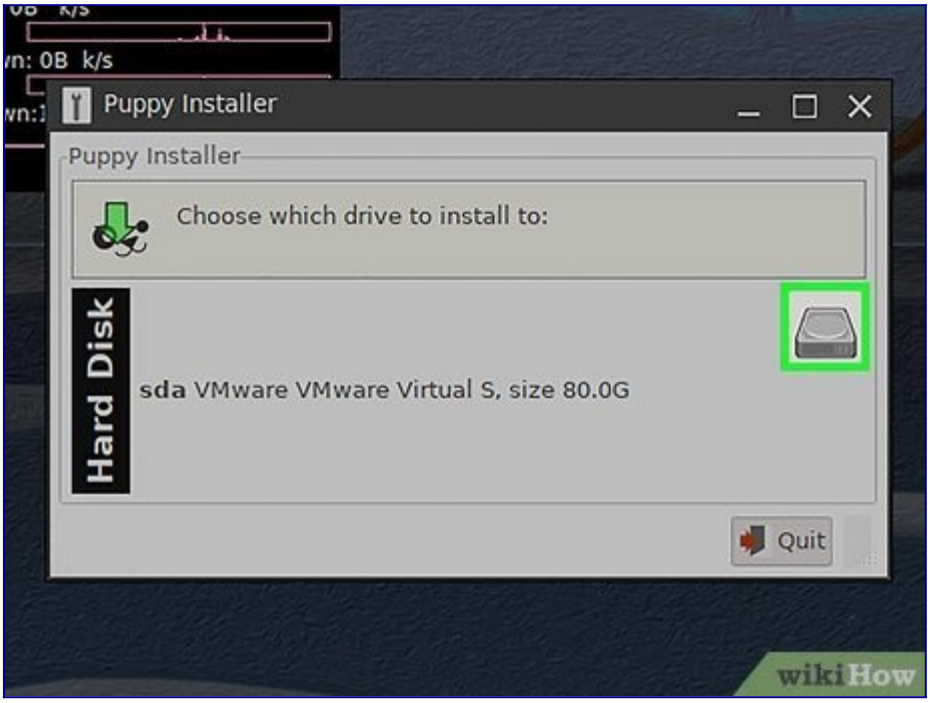
3

Select **Installer.** It's in the install menu. You can do both a regular and a frugal install with this option, as well as dual-boot Puppy Linux.

4.
Puppy Installer
If you wish to install Puppy to a removable media, such as a USB Flash or hard drive, please insert it right now, before proceeding. Then, choose the media that you want to install Puppy to.
Puppy Installer
USB
USB Flash drive / SD card
USB hard drive / SSD
Internal hard drive / SSD
Quit
wikiHow

4

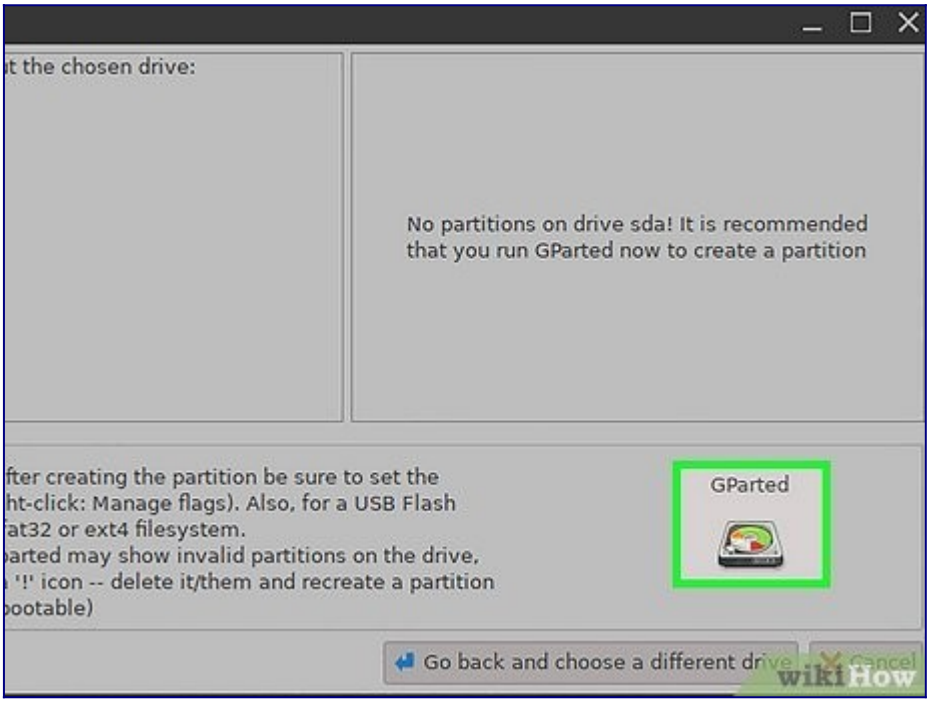
Select **Internal Hard Drive.** It's at the bottom of the menu.

5. 

5

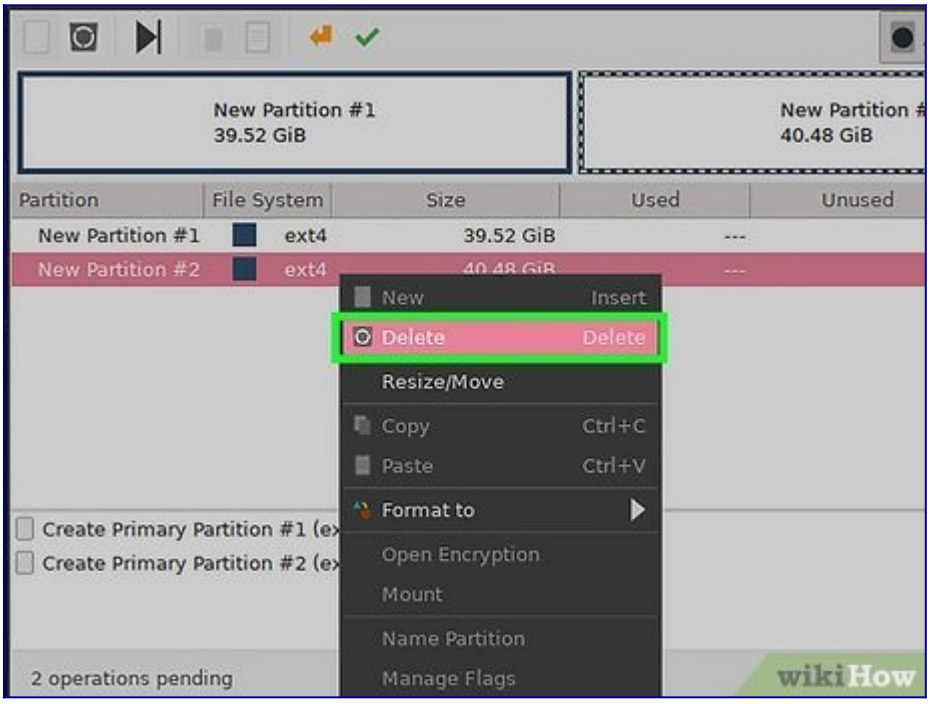
Select your boot drive. The menu will display information about each drive, including how much space is on each drive. Select the main hard drive that your computer boots from.

- If you want to dual-boot Puppy Linux with another operating system like Windows, you should partition the hard drive in Windows before installing Puppy Linux. Create a separate partition for Windows and Puppy Linux.

6. 
t the chosen drive:
No partitions on drive sda! It is recommended
that you run GParted now to create a partition
fter creating the partition be sure to set the
ht-click: Manage flags). Also, for a USB Flash
at32 or ext4 filesystem.
arted may show invalid partitions on the drive,
'!' icon -- delete it/them and recreate a partition
ootable)
GParted
Go back and choose a different dr
Cancel
wikiHow

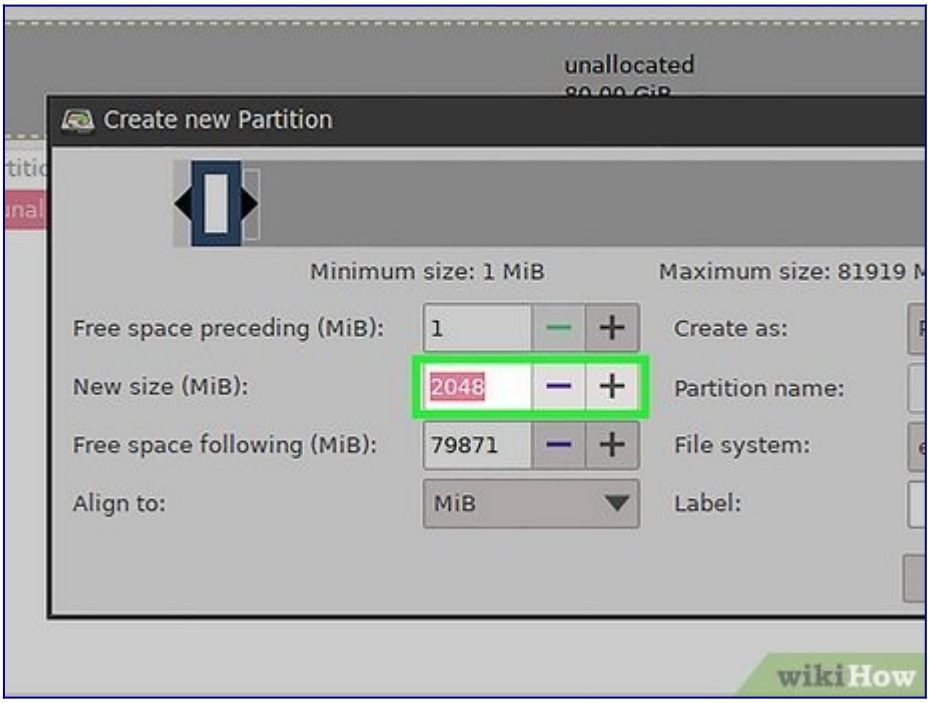
6

Click GParted. GParted is the drive management and partition application built into Puppy Linux. This tool can format your drives for a Puppy Linux installation.

7. 

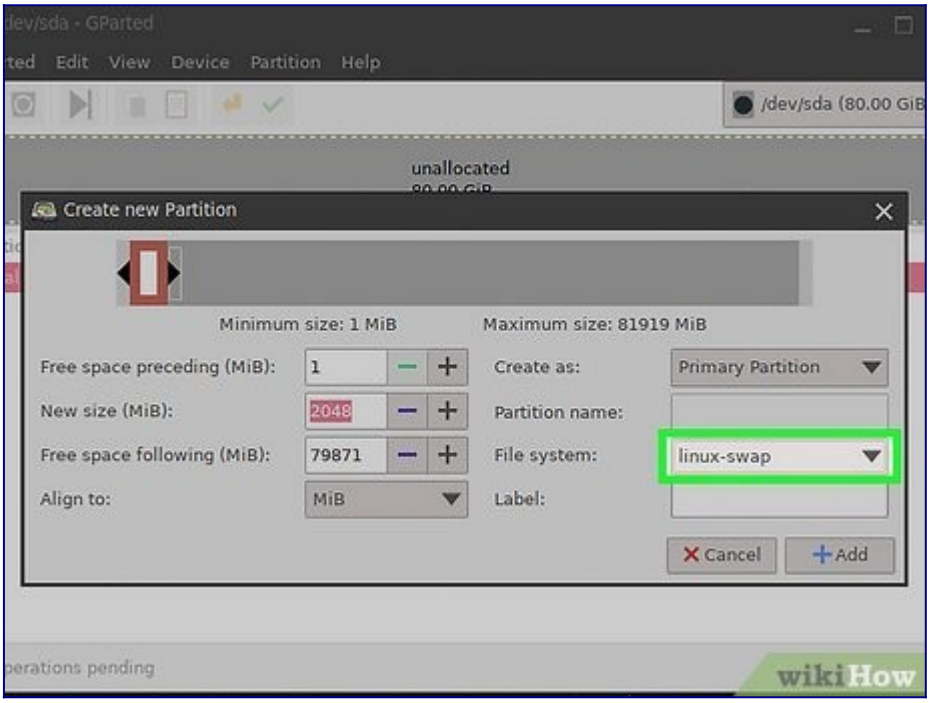
7

Delete any partitions that are on the drive. To do so, right-click the partitions and click **Delete**.

8. 

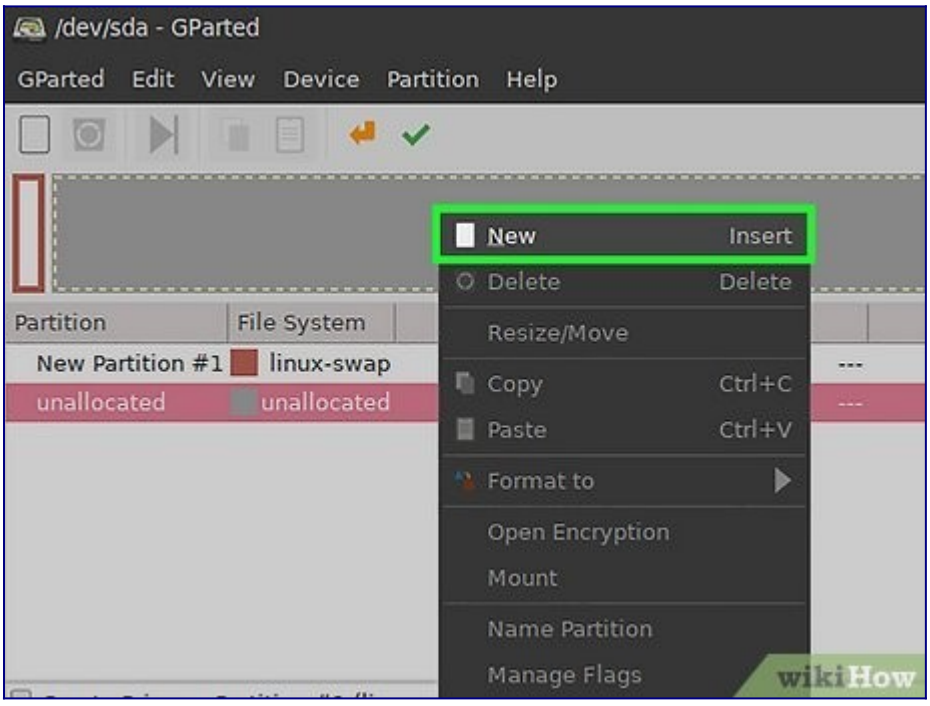
8

Create a new 2 GB partition. To do so, right-click the unallocated hard drive space and click **New**. Set the partition space to about 2 gigabytes. This will be the Linux Swap Space partition. Enter "2,048" (in megabytes) next to "Size."

9. 

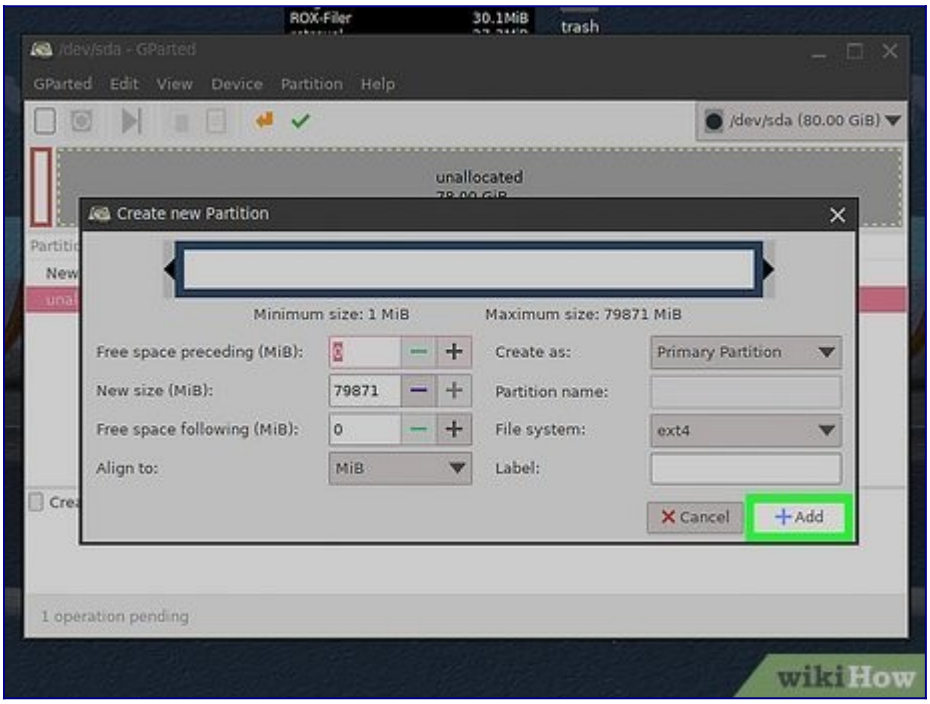
9

Select "Linux-swap" as the File System and click Add. This will create a new partition for the Linux Swap Space.

10. 

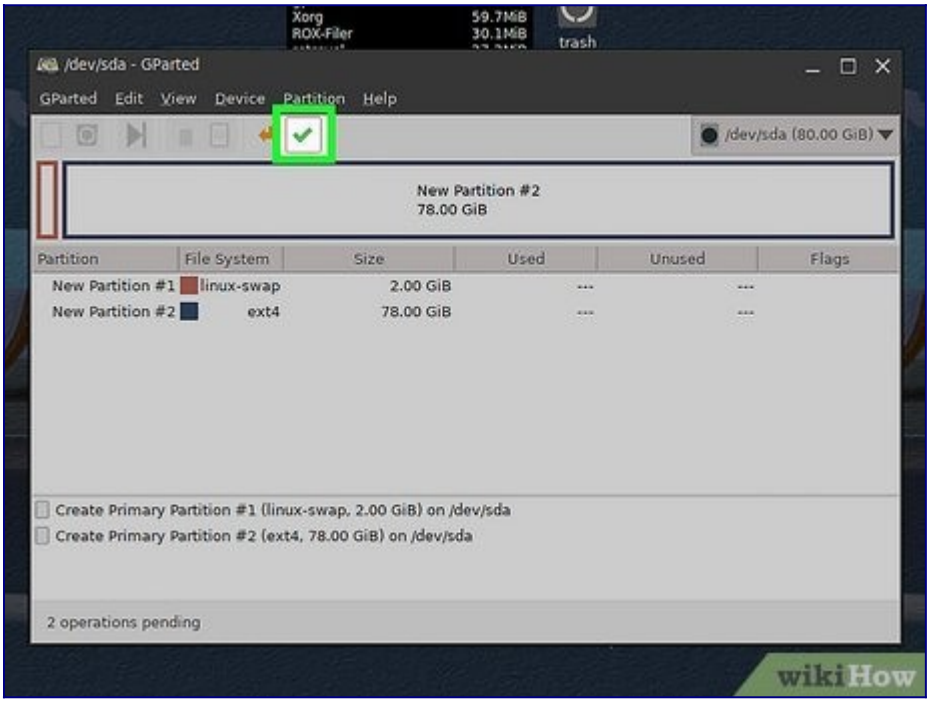
10

Right-click the remaining unallocated space and click New. This opens a new partition window.

11. 

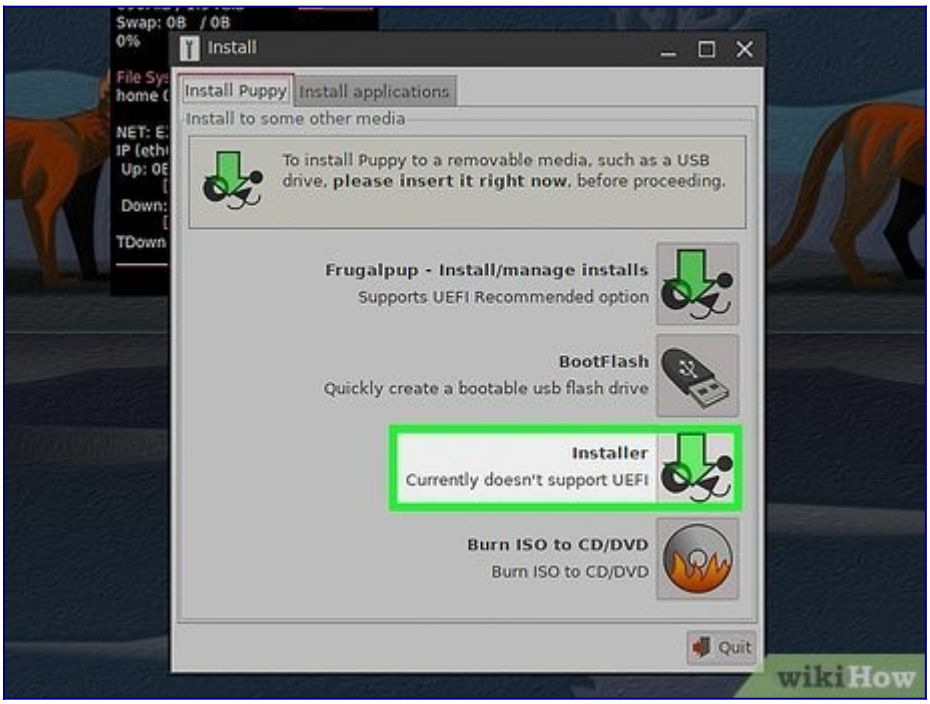
11

Leave everything as is and click Add. You can use the remaining hard drive space (unless you want to create separate partitions). Make sure the File System is "ext4." Make sure "Primary partition" is selected as "Create as." If you want, you can name the drive next to "Label." Click **Add** to create a new portion.

12. 
/dev/sda - GParted
GParted Edit View Device Partition Help
/dev/sda (80.00 GiB)
New Partition #2
78.00 GiB
Partition File System Size Used Unused Flags
New Partition #1 linux-swap 2.00 GiB --- ---
New Partition #2 ext4 78.00 GiB --- ---
Create Primary Partition #1 (linux-swap, 2.00 GiB) on /dev/sda
Create Primary Partition #2 (ext4, 78.00 GiB) on /dev/sda
2 operations pending
wikiHow

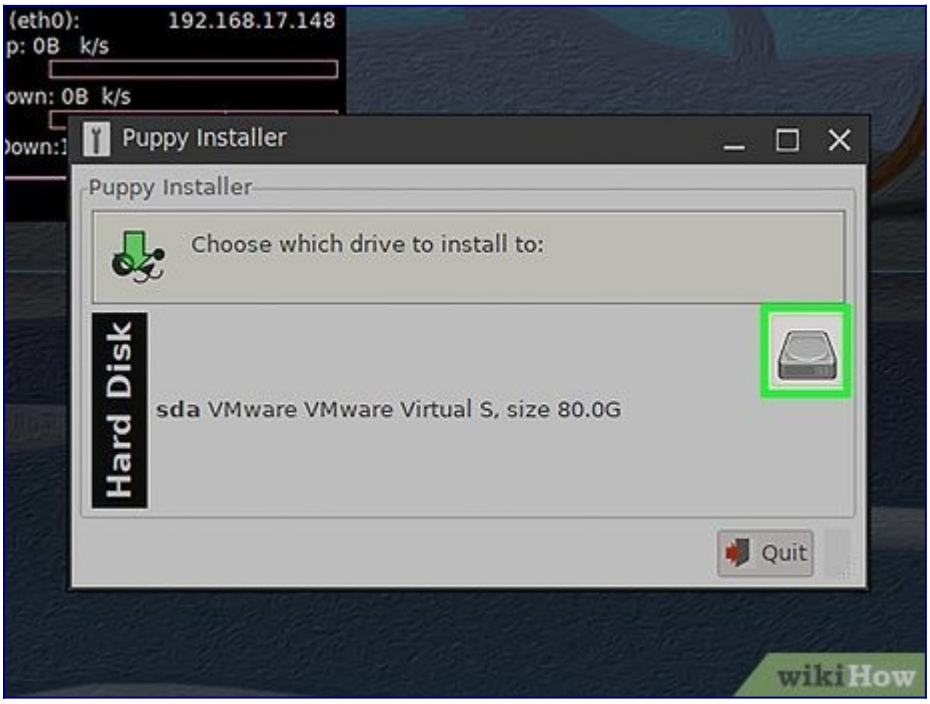
12

Apply the changes to the hard drive. To do so, click the green checkmark icon at the top of the page and click **Apply**. Once you are done, you can exit out of GParted.

13. 
Install
Install Puppy
Install applications
Install to some other media
To install Puppy to a removable media, such as a USB drive, please insert it right now, before proceeding.
Frugalpup - Install/manage installs
Supports UEFI Recommended option
BootFlash
Quickly create a bootable usb flash drive
Installer
Currently doesn't support UEFI
Burn ISO to CD/DVD
Burn ISO to CD/DVD
Quit
wikiHow

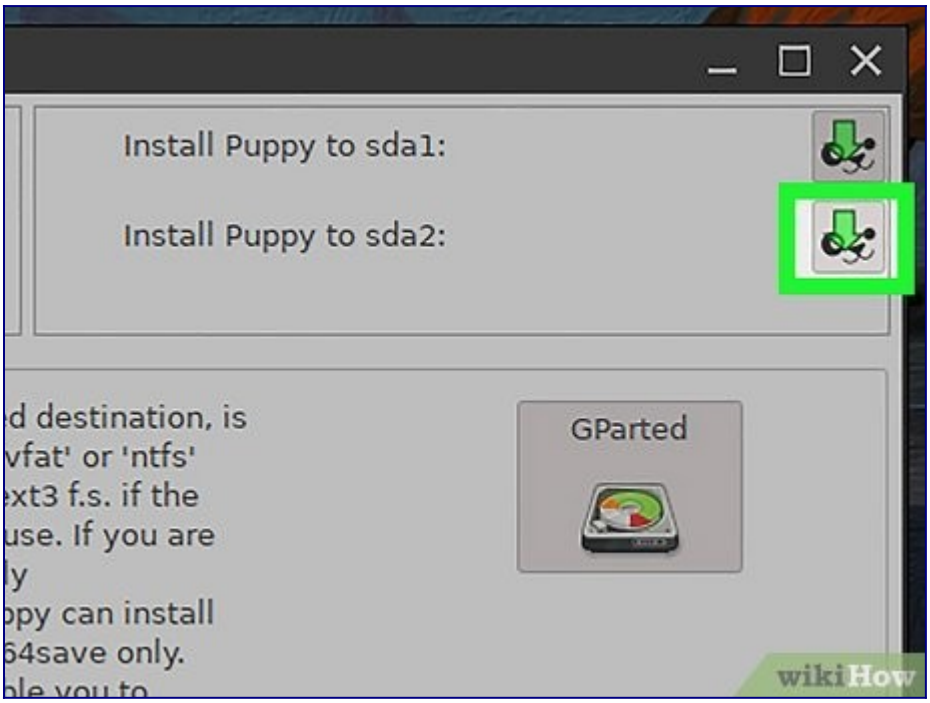
13

Click **Installer.** It's the third option in the Install menu.

14. 

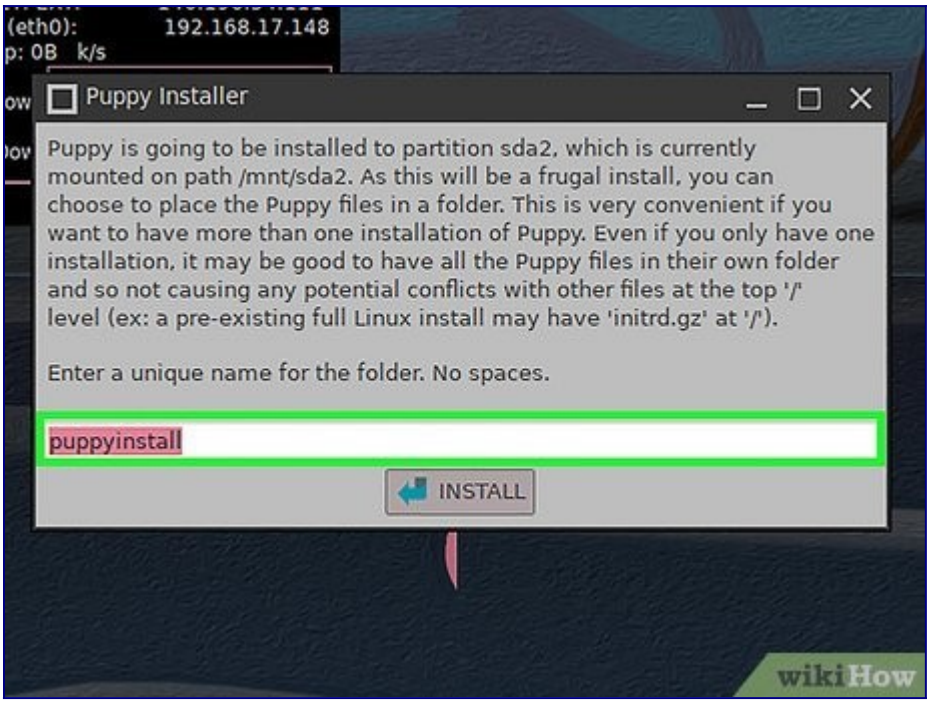
14

Select your hard drive. This is the main hard drive listed next to "Hard Drive" in the list of available hard drives.

15. 

15

Click the install button next to the primary partition and click OK. This is the partition with most of your hard drive space. For example, if "sda1" is the swap space partition, and "sda2" is the drive with most of the hard drive space, click the install button next to "sda2."[6]

16. 
(eth0): 192.168.17.148
p: 0B k/s
Puppy Installer
Puppy is going to be installed to partition sda2, which is currently mounted on path /mnt/sda2. As this will be a frugal install, you can choose to place the Puppy files in a folder. This is very convenient if you want to have more than one installation of Puppy. Even if you only have one installation, it may be good to have all the Puppy files in their own folder and so not causing any potential conflicts with other files at the top '/' level (ex: a pre-existing full Linux install may have 'initrd.gz' at '/').
Enter a unique name for the folder. No spaces.
puppyinstall
INSTALL
wikiHow

16

Enter a unique name (optional) and click Install. If you want to create a unique name for the installation folder, enter it in the text field. It cannot have any spaces in the name. Otherwise, you can leave the default name and click **Install**.

17.
'Puppy Installer - Grub4dos'
You now have the option to install a bootloader named 'grub4dos'. It is a very simple exercise and will find all of your previous Windows and Linux installations and create a simple boot menu so you can choose which Operating System to boot at power on.
Would you like to install Grub4dos?
Yes
No
wikiHow
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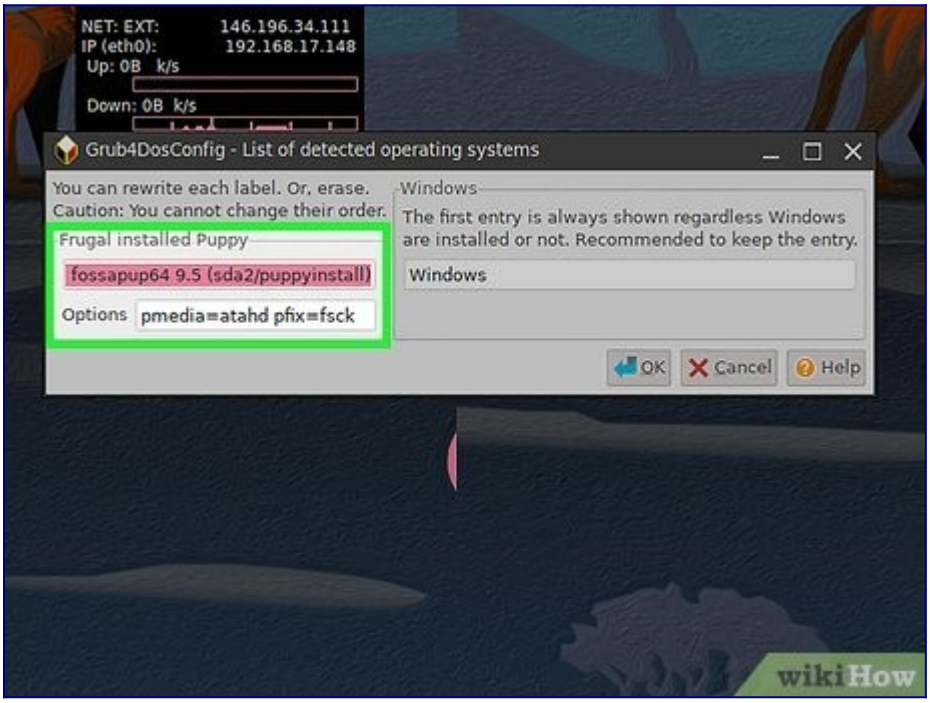
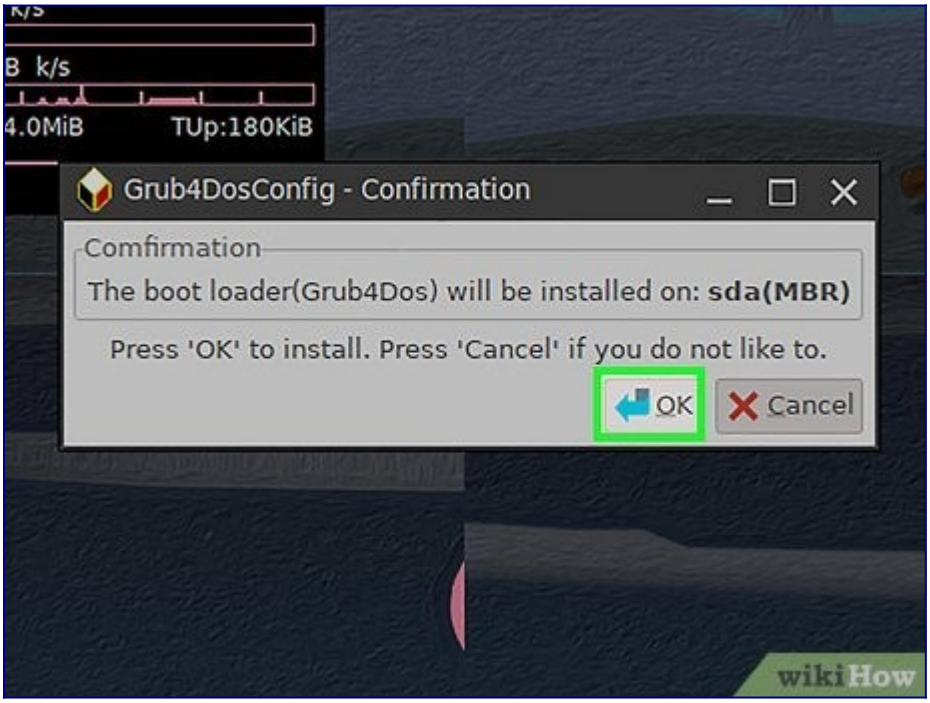
Click Yes and then OK to create bootloader. This will create a new bootloader containing both Puppy Linux and any other operating systems you have installed.

- If you receive an error message, click **Proceed anyway**.[7]

18. 

18

Enter a label for each operating system (optional) and click Ok. You can leave the labels as their defaults or enter your own labels for Puppy Linux and any other operating systems you have installed. Click **OK** when you are done.

19. 

Click Ok on the remaining windows. You will see a few more confirmation windows. The first one confirms that you want to install the bootloader. Then, you will see a confirmation pop-up once the bootloader is installed and a few more pop-up windows with some information. Click **OK** on all the pop-up Windows. Once you are done, you can select which operating system you want to boot when you boot your PC.